

SERGEANT ERIK CALLISON OLSON

The 100th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence was celebrated in 1876 with intense patriotic fervor across the nation. A group of the descendants of revolutionary war patriots in San Francisco formed a fraternal organization called the Sons of Revolutionary Sires. Their objective was to have a fraternal and civic society to salute those men and women who pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to the battle for independence from Great Britain. The Sons of Revolutionary Sires were dedicated to keeping alive their ancestors' story of patriotism and courage in order to inspire future generations should they be called upon to defend and extend our freedoms. This group became the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution on April 30, 1889, the 100th anniversary of the inauguration of our first president, George Washington. The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution was chartered by an Act of the United States Congress on June 9, 1906, under President Theodore Roosevelt and has been referred to by the acronym SAR for over 100 years. Today we have more than 500 local chapters and seven international societies and 33,000 members.

Our members are from all walks of life and are dedicated to the SAR Goals of Patriotism, preserving and promoting the History of our Nation, and Educating both young and old about the principles upon which our nation was founded, and the patriots who fought to preserve them. Many of us serve our fellow citizens in the fields of medicine, education, and law or as builders, laborers, skilled craftsmen, or artists. Some wear a uniform that signifies their dedication to preserving or protecting their fellow man. Many in uniform are our veterans who have pledged their lives to preserve and defend our constitution. Tonight, it is my honor to recognize one of our veteran compatriots.

I would like to ask all our members and any guests who are veterans to join me.

One of the primary missions in the SAR Mission Statement is that "This organization shall strive to honor, respect, and support the sacrifices of our veterans, ... especially those confined to residential and hospital facilities provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs."

One of the things the SAR has done to fulfill this mission is to recognize the service of any veteran with a medal that identifies them as a veteran and signifies the respect of the SAR for their service. The SAR has two medals that may be given to a veteran in recognition of their honorable military service. The War Service medal is given "in grateful recognition for service in the Armed Forces during an armed Conflict" and the Military Service Medal is awarded "in grateful recognition for service in the United States Armed Forces." The SAR does not rank one medal above the other since any individual who serves in the Armed Forces is required to do their assigned duty

regardless of the location of the duty station which may or may not place them in harms way. Both medals are ranked 4th in precedence in the SAR. Nineteen of our Mt. Vernon SAR patriots have submitted their form DD 214 and been awarded the Military Service Medal or the War Service Medal.

Tonight, it is my privilege to recognize Erik Callison Olson. Erik could not join us tonight and we have asked his father Chuck Olson to convey our appreciation and recognition.

Erik and his family have been serving our Nation since its foundation. His SAR Revolutionary War ancestor was Pvt. William Hansard who served in Virginia. Moving forward to the War of 1812 one of his great grandfathers, Peter Burkhart, served under Andrew Jackson at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend. At least four Great grandfathers on the Olson line of his family served in the Civil War with the army of East Tennessee under General Sherman. His great grandmother was one of the first women allowed to serve in the U.S. Navy in WWI, and during WWII a grandfather served as part of a security detail on the Manhattan Project (although not in uniform). And we all know his dad LTC Chuck Olson, US Army (retired) who continues to serve through the Boy Scouts, Veterans Groups, and the SAR.

Chuck's son, Sergeant Erik Callison Olson served in the United States Army from 2005 to 2016. He served as a Cavalry Scout for 12 years. His eight years of Active Duty included three tours in Iraq between 2005 and 2011 where he actively participated in the Iraq Campaign and the War on Terrorism. He was in the active Army Reserve from 2012 to 2016.

Sergeant Olson was awarded the National Defense Medal; Global War on Terrorism Medal; Iraq Campaign Medal with 5 Campaign Stars; Good Conduct Medal with an Oak leaf cluster; Army Achievement Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters; Army Commendation Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters; 2 Meritorious Unit Citations; a Valorous Unit Citation and The Purple Heart.

I think most of these men who have joined me up here would agree that of all the recognitions that a veteran may be given perhaps the most significant is the Purple Heart. It is the oldest one, created at the direction of George Washington, and recognizes a soldier who has been wounded in combat while serving our Nation. To put Erik's service in perspective he "was blown up four times" and lived to continue to serve.

Lieutenant Colonel Chuck Olson please accept this engraved War Service Medal on behalf your son Erik Callison Olson from the National Society and Mount Vernon Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution and in recognition of his service during time of War to a grateful Nation.